

lords were jealous of a Bishop's military authority, and regarded the Duke's cause as the cause of their own class. If he was not to go to Spain, they claimed that he should at least be sent in command of the Flemish crusade. Party feeling ran high, and threats of violence were used on both sides. Finally, the Commons and the Church had their way against the will of the majority of the lay peerage, the Bishop assumed the cross at St. Paul's with great ceremony, and soon after left England in sole command of a formidable array.<sup>1</sup>

When the crusaders arrived at Calais, the question arose whether they should attack France or Flanders. Spencer was in a curious position. He had been commissioned by Pope Urban to slay Clementists, and a great part of his army consisted of devotees who had come abroad to win salvation by that Christian exercise. Now the men of Flanders were Urbanists, and even their Earl, though so lately restored by Clementist arms, professed himself faithful to the Vatican. As crusaders, the English had no longer any right to attack the Flemings. But the Bishop had received a parliamentary grant 'for the succour and comfort of Ghent.'<sup>2</sup> As general of the English army, he was therefore bound to attempt the reconquest of Flanders in alliance with the remnant of Artevelde's faction, who still held the great city. He finally succeeded in reconciling his incongruous duties by attacking the Earl of Flanders as a heretic, on the ground that he was supported on his throne by the Clementist French. He marched first against the Flemish coast towns, displaying the Papal banner of St. Peter's keys, under which ensign he slew several thousand faithful subjects of the Vatican. He took possession of Gravelines, Dunkirk, Nieuport, Furnes, and all the coast as far as Sluys. He then turned inland, and, with the help of the men of Ghent, laid siege to Ypres, the key of South Flanders. Here his career of victory was checked by the appearance of the French army, hastening to the relief of the Earl. In the face of any serious opposition, Spencer could not long conceal his inability to fill the post

<sup>1</sup> *Hot. Parl.*, iii. 144-6 ; Higden, ix. 17-8 ; Wals., ii. 84 ;

*Cont. Eulog.*, 356.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, lii. 145-6 ; Froissart, ii. chaps. 194-6. For a full account of the crusade see *The Crusade, of 1383*, by G. M. Wrong (James Parker, 1892).